

# Dragon Tales



## DOGWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

12300 Glade Drive, Reston, VA 20191

Robyn E. Cochran, Principal

William Vardeman, Assistant Principal

Sarah Aiello, Intersession Coordinator

Gina Hensberger, Special Projects Coordinator

Website: <http://www.fcps.edu/DogwoodES/>

Volume 2

Main Office: 703-262-3100

Attendance Line: 703-262-3131

September 22, 2009

## Principal's Column

As other schools are just beginning, it's hard to believe we are more than halfway through our first quarter of school. Our first PTA meeting was very well attended. We shared an academic update with parents that included a celebration of student achievement gains and our Dogwood instructional priorities for 09-10. Students in all 29 subgroups identified by the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) legislation, made significant gains in the areas of math and reading based on the annual Virginia Standards of Learning Assessments (SOL Assessments), the public measure. This includes steady gains of students scoring in the "Pass Advanced" range with SOL scores beyond 500. Additionally, Dogwood students made significant growth and progress measured by common assessments conducted by Fairfax County Public Schools in all content areas.

As a Title 1 school, we are fortunate to have additional resources and personnel to help us implement our initiatives and achieve our goals. We will continue to monitor student progress regularly and provide students with supports, extensions, and intervention in order to help them meet and exceed their learning goals.

### Welcome Mrs. Azad & Ms. Simpson!

Our student numbers have continued to grow in our first and third grades. We have created a new class in each grade and are very thrilled to welcome our new Dogwood teachers. Mrs. Azad is our new first grade teacher and Ms. Simpson is our new third grade teacher. To make the best use of space for our new third grade class, Fairfax County is enclosing part of our upstairs pod space. Construction began Friday evening and will continue this week. Special thanks to our FCPS Facilities and coordinator, Bill Fenimore, for making this

possible so very quickly. Bill is working very closely with us throughout the construction project.

### PTA

Each month as part of our PTA meeting, we highlight a topic of interest or academic focus. Topics are selected by parent interest. We invite you to join us for monthly PTA meetings. They are held on the first Thursday of each month from 7-8 PM in the library. Spanish translation and child care is provided.

Our PTA invites families to join us for our first family night at Chuck E. Cheese, Thursday, September 24, from 4-8 PM.

### Fall Intersession - October 13-23, 2009 (No School-October 12<sup>th</sup>)

Welcome to the first Intersession of the 2009-2010 school year! Registration will run from **September 23** through **October 2<sup>nd</sup>**. Intersession information and registration packets are included in today's Tuesday Folder. Students will be able to participate in a wide variety of classes. Classes are offered in the areas of language arts, math, social studies, science, fine arts, physical education, and technology.

Each 1-6 grade student can sign up for two classes, A.M. & P.M. sessions. In some cases, your child's teacher has the option of choosing one class for your child if he/she feels that a particular class will support and enhance your child's academic progress. Kindergarten class selections have been pre-planned. No A.M./P.M class selections are necessary. We will just need to know if your kindergarten student will attend Intersession.

There **is no cost or fee** for Intersession this year for any student.

We are very happy to help you make class selections that best meet learning needs for your child. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher, or, Sarah Aiello, Intersession Coordinator via email, [sarah.aiello@fcps.edu](mailto:sarah.aiello@fcps.edu) or by phone, 703-262-3115.

**Partnership and Communication**

Your partnership is essential to your child's academic success and we look forward to working closely with you throughout the school year. We invite you to stay in close communication with your child's teacher(s). The weekly **Tuesday Folder** will contain school-wide information as well as individual classroom and grade level team information. The **Dragon Tales** is our school-wide newsletter and is sent home on the second or third Tuesday of each month. Please register for the **FCPS Keep in Touch (KIT)** notification system. This will allow you to receive messages from Fairfax County Public Schools that pertain to your child. Register via this link at: [www.fcps.edu/kit](http://www.fcps.edu/kit).

**Parent-Teacher Conference Dates: October 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>**

Students will not attend school on these days. Teachers are in the midst of scheduling conferences with each family. The purpose of parent-teacher conferences is to share and exchange information that will help us more specifically meet your child's academic learning needs. Teachers will update you regarding student progress and will offer ideas that can help you as a parent learning partner. Please plan to share ideas and information with your child's teacher and feel free to ask any questions you have. In addition to the October 8 and 9 dates, teachers are flexibly arranging conference dates that meet your scheduling needs.

**Our New Fence:** FCPS completed work on our new backyard fence. The purpose of adding a fence is to increase safety of students and staff during the school day. A special "thanks" is extended to Jim McLain, Coordinator of Security for FCPS, for working with us to make this possible. One locked gate is included as part of the fencing. The gate will be unlocked daily 30 minutes prior to the opening of school at 8:10 AM and closed 30 minutes after opening at 9:10 AM. The gate will be unlocked 30 minutes prior to school dismissal at 2:50 PM and closed 30 minutes following office closing at 4:30 PM. The gate will remain closed and locked during the evening hours and on weekends.

Robyn E. Cochran  
Principal

**Dogwood School Hours  
2009 - 2010**

<b>Monday (FECEP)</b>	<b>8:40 AM - 12:50 PM</b> <b>8:40 AM - 11:00 AM</b>
<b>Tuesday-Friday</b>	<b>8:40 AM - 3:20 PM</b>

**Calendar**

**September:**  
24<sup>th</sup> PTA Chuck E. Cheese Family Night (4:00-8:00 PM)

**October:**

1<sup>st</sup> Make-Up Picture Day  
1<sup>st</sup> PTA Meeting (7:00 PM-8:00 PM) Library  
7<sup>th</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Ends  
7<sup>th</sup> SES Tutor Fair (6:00 PM-8:00 PM) Cafeteria  
8<sup>th-9<sup>th</sup></sup> No School- -Student Holiday  
12<sup>th</sup> No School- -Columbus Day Holiday  
13<sup>th</sup>- 23<sup>rd</sup> Optional Intersession  
26<sup>th</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Begins  
27<sup>th</sup> CogAT Testing  
30<sup>th</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Field Trip- -Museum of Natural History

**November:**

3<sup>rd</sup> NO School—Student Holiday

**Counselor's Corner**



WOW, it is amazing that we have been in school for 7 weeks. During our counseling lessons in the classroom for the next several weeks we will have discussions about bullying behaviors. These discussions will be K-6. All classes will discuss and learn how to identify bullying behaviors.

Homework Help web sites

Fairfax County Public Library  
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/homework/>  
click on "Live Homework Help" to talk online with a free tutor.

Fairfax County Public Schools Library Services  
<http://www.fcps.edu/DIS/LMS/index.htm>

Heather Palmeter  
(703) 262-3147

Suzanne Bond  
(703) 262-3137

**SCA News**

By: Jason Garcia

Dogwood Elementary has chosen their new SCA officers:

**President** is Siria Aparicio  
**Vice President** is Turner Walton  
**Secretary** is Jason Garcia  
**Treasurer** is Claire Thomas  
**Sgt. at Arms** is Isabella Wnek  
**Historian** is Jacob Hutzler

### SCA Happenings:

The new officers will be helping at the multicultural festival which will be held at Lake Anne on September 26<sup>th</sup>.

Our **spirit day** will be Dogwood colors which are green and white on **September 25<sup>th</sup>**.

The first student council meeting is Wednesday, September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## Jetting into the GEMS Club

When Major Suzi Schulz of the National Air Guard flies her jet full of dignitaries into the Iraqi desert, no one is worried that she barely met the height requirements for flight school because she is a real professional at what she does. Major Schulz was the first guest speaker for The GEMS (Girls Excelling in Math and Science) Club. She came to share with the fifth and sixth grade club members how important it is to set your goals and make steps to achieve those goals. In some fields, like aviation, there are not many women represented but we shouldn't let that stop us. She encouraged the girls to be "all in" and never give up on your dreams.

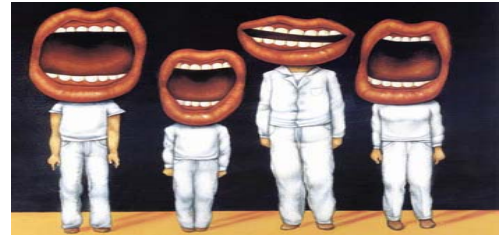
The purpose of the GEMS Club is to inspire girls to pursue their interests in math and science and to continue to excel in these courses and careers in later life. So many girls lose interest in math and science in the upper grades and as a result fewer girls continue their studies. We want girls to know that they can succeed in science, technology, engineering, and math - or STEM careers. Women tend to be underrepresented in these fields and we are missing out on the talents of our young women.

The GEMS Club meets after school once a month from 3:15 – 4:30. We have fun with math and science and enjoy making friends with other girls who like these classes, too. Our next meeting is September 29 after school. We look forward to seeing everyone again!



GEMS Club members smile with Major Schulz

## SPEECH NEWS



Dear Dogwood Parents and Friends,

Hi! My name is Jan Youell, and I am the Speech-Language Pathologist here at Dogwood. I will be writing to you each month in this **SPEECH NEWS** column in order to share some important ideas and information about speech and language to be used with your school-aged child or your pre-school aged child. Please feel free to contact me, 703-262-3139 with any questions and I will address them in my monthly column if it might be a question of interest to many parents. Or we can just chat privately and I will help you with your concerns or questions.

Dear parents, I have always loved my profession and think that communication is such an honor to teach to others. It's what sets us apart and becomes one of the most important foundations for our children's' success, not just in school, but in life. How could one not love having a significant part in that aspect of our children's development? I look forward to meeting you and welcome you to drop by my office (Room #130) to say hello.

Well, that's about it for this time. Next time, I will share with you more about the *specific* speech and/or language disorders and what YOU can do to help your children with their own speech and language development. For now, you can make sure you READ, READ, READ with them and ask them WH-questions (Who? What? What doing? Where? When? Why? How?) about what has been read. Engage them in conversation and listen to them. Teach them to love to talk and to be rewarded for speaking (whether we always like it or not). I will also share with you in the future the important relationship between early language proficiency and literacy.

And finally, for this month's OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES comes this:

I was finishing up some kindergarten screening earlier in the quarter and one little guy looks up at me after I'd been, apparently, drilling him on question-after-question (at least in his eyes), and he gives me a big sigh and says, "I'm sorry ... I just don't have any more for you today."